SourDough Notes

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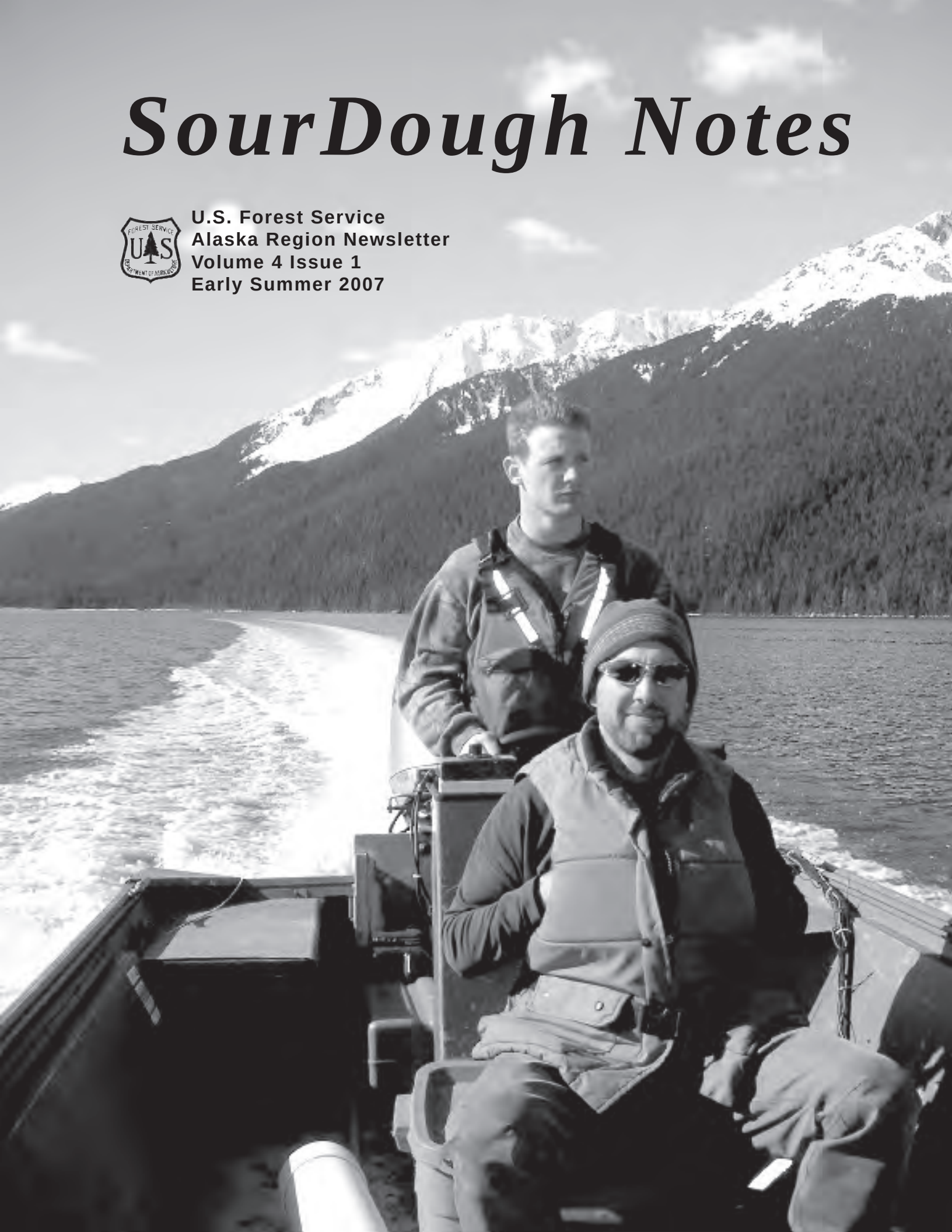

ON THE COVER:

Tongass National Forest employees Dave Beatty and Pete Schneider travel by boat to complete field work in Berners Bay north of Juneau. Photo by Chad Hood.

SourDough Notes

Quarterly newsletter for the
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Early Summer 2007

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Articles should be no more than 800 words and may be edited. Submitted articles may not all be printed. Submitted digital photos should be sent as high resolution TIF or JPG. Please contact the Public Affairs Office if you have questions.

INSIDE:

Lee Benson
Yakutat District Ranger

Lee Benson reported for duty as the new District Ranger in Yakutat May 21. Benson has worked for the federal government for 15 years. His career began in Hines, Ore., as a range conservationist with the Bureau of Land Management. He later transferred to the National Park Service and worked for seven years as a wildlife biologist in southern Arizona. For the past five years, Benson managed the timber and planning program on the Reserve Ranger District, Gila National Forest, N.M.

Benson received degrees from Colorado State University in Zoology and Range Management.

Benson and his wife Gloria enjoy hiking, skiing, and fishing. They have four children and one grandchild. Two of their sons still live at home.

Benson said they were,"very excited about the prospects of moving to Alaska."

We're On the Web

Look for the companion version of *SourDough Notes* on the web. The stories will change throughout the quarter. You will find additional full color photos and links for more information on some subjects. In the near future, SDN for the Web will become more interactive, inviting your comments and participation. Stay tuned! http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/

Working with Watercraft

By Chad Hood, Fisheries Technician, Juneau Ranger District, Tongass National Forest

For many of us on the Tongass National Forest, field season is the reason we brave the long cold winters of Southeast Alaska. Few roads exist in most communities on the Tongass. On many districts, boating is the main mode of transportation into the field.

Dave Beatley and Pete Schneider tag fish after arriving in remote location by boat. Photo by Chad Hood.

The morning commute begins with fueling the boat up and filing a float plan. On the nice sunny calm days, it is hard for us to imagine being stuck in the office. We know these sunny days are few and far between. There will be many challenges and dangers that boat operators must deal with.

Safety is paramount, and begins with proper training and preparation before we ever leave the dock. All boat operators must go through initial training followed by on the water training. In addition to training, operators must go through preboating checklists that include filing a float plan, checking the marine forecast, reviewing navigational charts for potential hazards, and boat inspections.

The Juneau Ranger District fisheries crew has an active boating program in both marine and river operations. Our current fleet of boats includes a 30' cabin cruiser for long distance trips, a 23' landing craft for gear transportation and local marine operations, and two jet boats (19' and 16') for river operations. In the past we have even used an airboat to operate in shallow locations such as the Lace River in Berners Bay. Each boat handles differently and specific training is required for each one. The air boats and jet boats are excellent watercraft in the river, but getting to the river in them can be tough. The boats are not designed for the 2' to 3' chop often found in saltwater, and that can make for a slow and uncomfortable trip. Most of our work sites on the district are remote and have no docks or facilities. Most sites are within 30 miles of Juneau and range from protected waters to more open areas where rough water is of greater concern.

Over the years of boating operations, we have witnessed amazing spectacles of nature or odd situations that we would never encounter on a paved road. For example, when boating to our Berners Bay eulachon camp in the spring, we have to watch for pods of sea lions. At times, the bay is full of them feeding on eulachon and herring. Collisions are a real concern. Of course we've never hit a sea lion, but we have had to slow the boat down or alter our course.

Icebergs can also pose a serious hazard south of Juneau. Since the bulk of an iceberg is underwater, even the most innocent-looking iceberg can be damaging.

Several years back, while boating in Seymour Canal on northeast Admiralty Island, we found ourselves in the middle of a group of humpback whales. We opted to cut power and let the whales pass. Several minutes passed and we thought the whales had moved through. Moments later, a humpback surfaced close enough that I could see down its blow hole. It was an amazing experience until I realized that if the whale had surfaced any closer, it could have capsized our 16' work skiff.

These are just some of the highlights of living on the Tongass and working with watercraft. Our reliance on this mode of transportation is one of the aspects that makes our region unique in the Forest Service.

Chad Hood drives an airboat on the Lace River. Photo by Pete Schneider.

Updates: Alaska Region Wilderness

By Trish Clabaugh, Program Leader, Wilderness, Recreation Special Uses, and Special Areas

The Wilderness Act of 1964 established the National Wilderness Preservation System "…to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of Wilderness." In the Alaska Region, 5.8 million acres have been designated as wilderness (19 areas) on the Tongass National Forest. Another two million acres on the Chugach National Forest are set aside as a wilderness study area. Wilderness comprises almost 35 percent of the National Forest System lands in Alaska. Along with other federal agencies in Alaska, the Tongass and Chugach national forests share the unique and complex challenge of managing wilderness under both the Wilderness Act of 1964 and ANILCA, which allows for exceptions in wilderness. These ANILCA exceptions include subsistence policies, special access (including motorized use), in-holding access, public use cabins, aquaculture activities, and temporary facilities for the taking of fish and game.

Wilderness kayak rangers monitor cruise ship emissions in Tracy Arm.

Chief's Challenge

In 2004, Chief Dale Bosworth challenged the Forest Service to manage all wilderness areas to a minimum standard of stewardship. The challenge includes ten elements to be scored each year, resulting in an annual "report card."

The ten elements are:

1. Direction that addresses the natural role of fire
2. Invasive plants
3. Air quality
4. Wilderness education plan
5. Forest plan direction to protect opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation
6. Recreation site inventories
7. Wilderness awareness in outfitter/ guide operating plans
8. Adequate direction to prevent degradation
9. Information needs
10. Baseline workforce.

On the Tongass, six wilderness areas made progress on these measures and qualified to receive additional funding from the Washington Office.

The wilderness managers are very committed to making improvements on scoring. To meet standard, each wilderness area has to score a minimum number of points in six of the ten elements. Even though none of the wilderness areas are currently meeting standard, managers are making progress. From 2005 to 2006, scores were increased for 15 wilderness areas, and scores for four stayed the same. The Tongass wilderness areas have shown progress in wilderness education plans, air quality monitoring, fire management planning, and the recreation site inventories.

There are still many challenges facing the wilderness managers in fully implementing the Chief's Challenge. Integration with other resource programs is the key to accomplishing the work.

Expectations

We will update outfitter/guide operating plans to include appropriate wilderness practices and wilderness values in the interaction with clients and the public. There are additional standards and guidelines for wilderness proposed in the Tongass Forest Plan amendment that will establish baseline points for all wilderness areas in two of the elements: adequate standards to prevent degradation; and direction for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Air quality monitoring continues on cruise ship emissions in the Tracy Arm wilderness. In April 2007, Juneau District Ranger Pete Griffin, Wilderness

Field Manager John Neary, and Wilderness Program Manager Ed Grossman met with representatives of the Cruise Industry and Pilots Association in Ketchikan. They introduced voluntary practices that could benefit wilderness despite lack of jurisdiction by the Forest Service on cruise industry activities. The proposed Wilderness Best Management Plan will address minimizing disturbance to seal pups and molting harbor seals by loud speaker announcements and horns.

Through a cooperative effort between the Forest Service and Sheldon Jackson College in Sitka, a master *Leave No Trace* course was developed for nine students from as far away as New York. The students spent five days sea kayaking, learning about the Tongass National Forest wilderness areas, and gaining experience in instructing others in *Leave No Trace* principles. Future courses are planned.

In June 2007, Neary, Wilderness Manager Mary Emerick, Backcountry Ranger Coordinator Dave Sanders, and others, will work with David Cole from the Aldo Leopold Research Center to develop a protocol for monitoring solitude in Alaska wilderness areas.

Chris Brown, National Director of Wilderness, will visit the Alaska Region this summer. He will tour the Nellie Juan–College Fiord Wilderness Study Area on the Chugach, view Pack Creek on Admiralty Island, stay overnight with the wilderness rangers at Harbor Island, and then continue to Misty Fiords National Monument. Brown will attend the national directors' meeting in Ketchikan, and participate in their field trip to Prince of Wales Island.

Wilderness Awards

Ruth Monahan, Director, Recreation, Lands, and Minerals, recently initiated two annual regional wilderness awards. At the regional leadership team meeting in May, she presented the *2006 Wilderness Champion Award* to Tongass Lead Kayak Ranger Tim Lydon for his passion and dedication to his job. Lydon publishes the "Wild Pursuits" newsletter; gives educational programs for tour boats from his sea kayak; delivers interpretive messages; presents to hundreds of school students each year; leads teachers into the wilderness during a week-long kayaking expedition to "train the trainers," teaches outfitter/guides; and more.

Juneau District Ranger Pete Griffin, Kayak Ranger Tim Lydon, and Regional Forester Denny Bschor following the 2006 Wilderness Champion Award *presentation this past May in Juneau. Photo by Teresa Haugh.*

Mary Emerick, wilderness manager on the Sitka Ranger District, received the *2006 Innovativeness toward Meeting the Chief's Ten-Year Stewardship Challenge Award*. Emerick worked with more than 40 outfitter/guides permitted on the Sitka Ranger District to use Tongass wilderness areas. She helped them develop their operating plans which guides them in imparting wilderness knowledge and skills to their clients. She began the work to develop a monitoring protocol for solitude that would help develop a baseline for all Tongass wilderness areas. She also wrote the Tongass wilderness fire plan that contributed to each wilderness area gaining points in the Chief's Challenge.

Wilderness manager Mary Emerick, recipient of the 2006 Innovativeness toward Meeting the Chief's Ten-Year Stewardship Challenge Award.

A Ward Lake Spring

By Jeff Garnette, Wildlife Technician, Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District, Tongass National Forest

As the days on the calendar slowly advance from April to May, change is on its way. While spring arrives on the coattails of Old Man Winter, day light lengthens and the mercury begins to rise. The advancing season brings many changes to Southeast Alaska. Birds migrate to their summer refuge and Chinook salmon return to the streams they left as smolts. Wildflowers, shrubs, and forbs complete their metamorphoses into the panoramic colors of spring as their flowers come into full bloom. Wobbly-legged fawns begin to appear, never far from their mothers' sides. Bears, waking from their winter slumber, are emerging from their dens with new born cubs in tow. While the sows forage on needed grasses and plants, cubs begin to test their new found freedom. Every living being in Southeast Alaska seems to be stretching its proverbial legs.

For many of us in the Forest Service, spring signals the beginning of a much needed new field season. Dusting (or in our case removing the mold) off the field packs, checking the survival kits, and making sure our radios are in working order are all tasks we do in anticipation for the upcoming field season. Unplugging the invisible cords which seem to have mysteriously grown from our computers to our heads is done with the glee of a fourth grader tossing school books into the air on the last day of school.

Kids dress as a beaver to learn about the animal's methods of adapting to its environment as part of Ward Lake Education Week.

At the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District, the beginning of May also means a chance to rekindle some childhood memories with Ward Lake Education Week. For a lucky few of us at KMRD, Ward Lake week has become synonymous with grade schoolers and fresh air. This week in May gives an opportunity for Forest Service employees to showcase the spectacular natural world Southeast Alaska has to offer. Fifth grade students from various schools spend a day at Ward Lake learning everything from animal adaptation to land navigation. Ward Lake provides the perfect setting for a mixture of fun and learning. Kids can leave the constraints of school, stretch their legs, and do what they do best—have fun. They spend up to 50 minutes at individual stations consisting of: fish ecology, botany, and wildlife and land navigation. They interact with Forest Service biologists and silvaculturists learning about each topic as well as the Forest Service itself. It's a week of laughter, learning, and much needed fresh air.

In early mornings, the children can be seen hunkered down around a small fire inside the shelters trying to shake off the damp cold. Usually by lunch time things have warmed up, and they spend time wading into the lake after ducks or chasing schools of fry near shore. Ward Lake Education Week is has been going on for over 15 years and is currently coordinated by District Education Specialist Leslie Swada.

Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District employees reach out to 5th grade students like these each spring.

Traditional Birch Bark Creations

By: Shannon Huber, Archaeologist, Seward Ranger District, Chugach National Forest

In celebration of our partnership with Native peoples of Alaska, the Seward Ranger District helped to facilitate a birch bark basket workshop as one of the many events celebrating the centennial of the Chugach National Forest. The workshop was held Friday, April 20 at a bed and breakfast in Seward. Heritage Program Manager Teneal Jensen organized the event which highlighted the basket making skills of Paula Bobby, a Dena'ina artisan from Lime Village. A fully booked class of twenty individuals signed up to learn the traditional art, and all participants left the class with a beginner's knowledge of the skill as well as their very own basket creation.

A birch bark basket workshop was held in April at the Seward Ranger District as a Chugach National Forest centennial event.

As Bobby began to guide the eager participants through the basket history and process, the weather cleared and allowed the class to go outside on a crisp spring evening. This was beneficial because of the messy process of stripping spruce root that was used as the basket thread. Stripping the root was quite the task. Traditionally, the roots are harvested a little later in the spring, when the sap is running, allowing for their bark to be removed easier. The work encouraged socialization among class members, from first-time introductions to "hellos" among friends. Everyone expressed their mutual desire of how, "I've always wanted to know how to do this."

After cutting the pieces of birch bark for their baskets, all were invited closer to the heat of the fire buoy (made from an old ocean buoy) in the yard. Heating the bark causes it to be more pliable, allowing it to be folded and shaped more easily. Bobby instructed everyone through the tricky folds for the basket corners, showing how to hold the corners in place with clamps. The clamps remained on the basket holding decorative willow and additional bark designs that were to be attached to the rim with the spruce thread. This process allowed individual creativity to show, as some chose to use stripped willow while others used more natural sections. With the clamps holding the pieces together, it was time to begin sewing.

The holes for stitching the spruce root are traditionally made by piercing the layers of bark with an awl, however due to class size and for the sake of time, a dremel tool was used to puncture the bark. The root was then laced through, up and over the willow, lashing the willow to the rim of the basket for added strength. At this point there is a critical need for patience: one must be mindful of how hard it is to maneuver the root through the hole. One false tug could cause the root to break. There was a strong sense of pride as the baskets neared completion. A variety of sizes and colors of baskets representing each creator were displayed, and they were as varied as the people attending the class.

Traditionally, the birch baskets had a variety of functions; the bark contains natural waxes that make it waterproof, enabling dry or wet storage along with cooking utility. All of the participants' baskets could be used in these ways and more, like a small one at the local hardware store inviting shoppers to enjoy a piece of candy.

An Explosion of Life: Springtime at Berners Bay

By Chad Hood, Fisheries Technician, Juneau Ranger District, Tongass National Forest

Every spring, animals of all shapes and sizes congregate to feed on the abundant runs of eulachon (*Thaleichthys pacificus*) found in Berners Bay, Alaska. Berners Bay is located roughly 45 miles north of Juneau and can be reached via boat five miles from the end of the road. Eulachon are an important food for indigenous peoples in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest, as well as an important prey species for Steller sea lions (*Eumetopias jubatus*). Eulachon have one of the highest oil contents of any fish in the world, and when dried, can even be lit on fire.

David Beatley holds up one of 100,000 fish trapped this year. Photo by Chad Hood.

The arrival of eulachon in the spring comes at a critical time for many predator species. Eulachon are one of the first abundant food supplies available after a long winter. By mid-April the many animals that rely on this little oily fish begin to arrive in the bay. Most common wildlife is gulls, eagles, terns, seals, sea lions, and humpback whales. Occasionally, we see moose, brown and black bear, and river otters, and hear wolves.

Initially, the eulachon will begin to show up in the river estuary. The whales, sea lions, salmon, and seals begin the feeding frenzy. By late April, the fish start running up the rivers. In a good year, eulachon flood these rivers in the millions. Seagulls swarm the rivers in full force. The feeding frenzy that ensues is nothing short of spectacular. This onslaught of feeding litters the shores with dead eulachon that were hit and missed. Next, the scavengers come in to pick up the leftovers. Often overnight we see eagle numbers increase from less than 50 to over 250. Otters and bears comb the shores as well.

For the past five years, the Juneau Ranger District fish crew has conducted a population estimate on Gilkey River eulachon. Very little is known about the habits of eulachon in Alaska, where they are limited to only a handful of rivers (mostly glaciated) and seem to have large population swings from year to year. The majority of our project consists catching fish on the lower Gilkey, tagging them, and recapturing them upstream. We only tag a small fraction of the fish in the river so these fish have a chance to mix with untagged fish as they travel. As we catch the fish upstream, we are able to compare the number of marked fish with the number of unmarked fish. These data allow us to determine a population estimate.

Chad Hood demonstrates why the oily eulachon are often called candlefish. Photo by Pete Schneider.

Long hours on the Gilkey River are common. The water often hovers just above freezing, and the weather can be extremely unpredictable. For many, the thought of sitting in a river at 4:30 a.m. with numb hands and feet and being pelted with rain would be unpleasant. However, we understand that our collection of baseline habitat and population information in such a pristine area will help the Forest Service monitor and assess impacts of future land management activities. For the JRD fish crew, there is no place we would rather be.

Tagged fish are recaptured upstream and compared to ratio of untagged fish. Photo by David Beatley.

Coffman Cove Receives National Award

By Terry Fifield, Archaeologist, Tongass National Forest

The City of Coffman Cove received a national award for its efforts to engage the public in historic preservation activities. Acting Thorne Bay District Ranger Dennis Benson presented Mayor Mikael Ash of Coffman Cove with the *National Windows on the Past Award* for 2007, May 2. This is the Forest Service's highest honor for public outreach in historic preservation, recognizes Coffman Cove's long-term commitment and perseverance in the study of archaeological sites at the City's waterfront and acknowledges the City's role in supporting the Coffman Cove Community Archaeology Project.

The Coffman Cove Community Archaeology Project (CCCAP) focuses on an ancient Tlingit village situated on the waterfront within the modern community of Coffman Cove on the northeast coast of Southeast Alaska's Prince of Wales Island. Since the inception of the CCCAP in 1997, the City has been a driving force behind the project, cooperating with multiple partners to provide research, educational, economic, interpretive, and social benefits from what some might have seen as a land management problem.

Leaders in Coffman Cove recognized the opportunities embodied in the archaeological site and with the help of the Forest Service, the local Tribal governments, the State of Alaska, the University of Oregon, Southeast Island School District, and other partners, cooperated in building a multi-faceted program. In 2005 the City hosted a *Project Archaeology* Teachers' Institute. In Summer 2006, they welcomed and supported an archaeological team consisting of a contractor (Northern Land Use Research of Fairbanks), student interns, Forest Service archaeologists and volunteers. The archaeologists recovered the remains of over 4,000 years of human occupation of the Coffman Cove waterfront.

Dr. Madonna Moss, University of Oregon, served as coprincipal investigator for the 2006 excavations. Photo by Terry Fifield.

Elaine Price, City of Coffman Cove, and Tongass Archaeologist Terry Fifield at the Windows on the Past Award presentation. Photo by Dee Dee Jeffreys.

The City of Coffman Cove's enthusiasm and willingness to support the project has been a key to the project's success. The partners in the CCCAP, led by Forest Service Archaeologist Terry Fifield, submitted the nomination for the Alaska Region *Windows on the Past Award.* The project won the regional award, and the nomination was subsequently forwarded on to the national level. The City of Coffman Cove was selected from among nominees from all Forest Service regions across the country as the national winner for 2007. The plaque and letter of award, signed by new Forest Service Chief Gail Kimbell, were presented at the Howard Valentine School with the participation of the students. The award letter mentions several people who have been especially supportive of the project (Elaine Price, DeeDee Jeffreys, Liz Mosenthin, Julie and Ron Hull, Judy Lux, Kevin Moore, Gary Wilburn, Carolyn Duncan, Janice Schad) and thanks the entire community for its support.

The 2006 fieldwork at Coffman Cove marked Phase I of a three-phase effort to learn about the City's past through the science of archaeology. The CCCAP partners hope to continue the project with further excavation, analysis, education, and interpretation in years to come.

Farewell to a K-9 Partner

By Teresa Haugh, Editor, Regional Public Affairs Office

It was with sadness that the Alaska Region received news of the death (due to liver disease) of K-9 employee Flash, an eight-year-old Chesapeake Bay retriever. Flash was well known on the Chugach National Forest where he went to work daily with his partner, Law Enforcement Officer Jeff Bryden.

Flash was the first wildlife detection dog in the Forest Service. There are other canine units in the Forest Service, but they focus mainly on drug detection work. Flash was trained and certified to detect caribou, moose, rainbow trout, black bear and brown bear. Bryden worked with Flash in detecting fish and game as part of their subsistence regulation duties.

Like other Alaska Region employees, Flash traveled by truck, boat, plane, ATV, and snow machine. He was a certified officer with his own Forest Service badge. He often wore a bright orange vest in high visibility areas.

When needed, Flash was used to track lost people or objects. As part of their training routine, Bryden would hide items such as a credit card or pocket knife. Bryden was often surprised by Flash's ability to locate anything with a human scent. For training on a more serious basis, Bryden hid bear gallbladders in plastic bags. Flash's ability to detect them even hidden under several feet of snow made him invaluable in detecting bear parts taken out of season by hunters.

Bryden and Flash were invited by the Smithsonian Institution to be a part of the 2005 Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C., that commemorated the 100th anniversary of the Forest Service. They shared their unique partnership with thousands of delighted visitors, who asked Bryden non-stop questions like, "Is Flash a *real* police dog?" A highlight of their trip was having their photos taken with G.W. Chapman (the Forest Service employee who rescued the real Smokey Bear cub from a wildfire in 1950), and Michael Johanns, Secretary of Agriculture.

Bryden said, "Losing Flash at such a young age was hard for me. Chesys are one of the longest living retrievers. I know several handlers whose K-9s are over 14 years old. Flash was not only my partner, but a member of my household."

Top: Law Enforcement Officer Jeff Bryden and his K-9 partner Flash worked together to protect wildlife on the Chugach National Forest.

Bottom: Bryden and Flash represented the Alaska Region at the 2005 Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C., that commemorated the 100th anniversary of the U.S. Forest Service. Photos by Teresa Haugh.

Thoughts from Regional Forester Denny Bschor
Transforming the Forest Service Affects Everyone

In early June, I joined your national leaders to focus on how we will change to accomplish our mission. We addressed why we have to change, the scope, timeline, roles and responsibilities, and who will help with transformation.

As employees, I hope you are aware of Alaska Region efforts on transformation. Regionally, we began our "Big Picture" efforts in September 2006. The Tongass began efforts several months before that and the Chugach continues in their change efforts.

Maria Lisowki, Transformation Manager.

Why—The Forest Service will become bankrupt without making major change in program delivery and organizations. Our increasing fixed costs will overtake our declining budget by FY2009. The increased funding to DOD and Homeland Security has affected other federal agencies besides the Forest Service. Also, our fire management costs are over 45% of our budget today. We have to reduce between 30-50% across the agency in just two years.

Scope—All units and all programs in Alaska Region will go through transformation. Ask what we can stop doing because it is not a priority, not relevant to our customers, or redundant at more than one level or program.

Timeline—For rest of 2007 we will complete region-wide workload and program recommendations, analyze changes in proposed organizations, and incorporate unit/program changes into a regional program delivery model. In 2008 we will develop operating procedures for new service/program delivery models, prepare organization charts and infrastructure needs, develop process maps for budget, prioritized programs of work, measures and accountability, implement region-wide teams and propose inter-regional work and teams.

Roles—Every place has its unique characteristics, culture, and work agreements. We will keep uniqueness as we undergo a "shift in thinking" on our priorities. We have to change to think of what is the greatest good for the region instead of every district or even every forest in outputs for every program in a year. The regional office will primarily provide strategic program leadership and management for prioritized work at the forest and district levels, and State & Private Forestry program delivery. As it transforms its focus to primarily strategic roles and functions, the RO will become smaller. Not all districts will have skilled staff in all programs. We will use region-wide and forest-wide teams as an effective tool for program planning, implementation and results.

Your Involvement—In addition to working within your program and unit on changes, we have two staff who have a specific transformation role. Please share ideas and concerns with them as we continue our changes in Alaska.

Bob Simmons is our Change Consultant. His role is to assist leadership and support employees during transformation. He will provide expertise on change processes and serve as a conduit for employee concerns to reach leadership in the Region. This will include presentations to units or groups upon request.

Bob said, "My primary mission will be to act as a lightening rod for people's concerns/frustrations/thoughts on all of our on-going transitions." You can reach Bob at: rlsimmons@fs.fed.us or 907-723-6713.

Maria Lisowski is our new Alaska Region Transformation Manager. Maria will develop our region-wide action plan, coordinate unit and program recommendations and process models, analyze workforce and employee input, coordinate our migration plan to new service delivery models, assist in development of region-wide team procedures, and advise the regional forester on program, unit and team developments for transformation. Maria can be reached at (907) 586-8891 or mlisowski@fs.fed.us.

I believe we have the wisdom and trust in this region to make hard decisions about our mission priorities, how we do business effectively, share our skills and information so we will be successful with less budget. We can transform and do so as we treat each other with respect.

Spruce Root Collecting at Fish Bay

By Jeremy Karchut, Sitka and Hoonah Zone Archaeologist, Tongass National Forest

In 2005, I was fortunate to meet Teri Rofkar, a Tlingit weaver who has a studio in the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center in partnership with the Sitka National Historical Park. Rofkar is an advocate for Northwest Coast arts, and is known for her efforts to keep the Tlingit artistic legacy alive. Rofkar is particularly interested in the traditional sourcing, harvesting and processing materials for making textiles, including spruce root baskets, and Raven's Tail and Chilkat robes.

I learned from Rofkar that the Forest Service sponsored a *Passport in Time* project for spruce root collecting in Yakutat in 1999. We agreed that creating a new opportunity for Sitka artists to gather and process spruce roots would be an excellent *Passport in Time* project for spring 2007.

Passport in Time volunteers on the Sitka Ranger District learn about the method for gathering and processing spruce roots for traditional Tlingit baskets.

Basketmaking technology has been around for millennia. Prehistoric spruce root baskets have been discovered in several locations on the Tongass. Baskets that were found on Baranof Island have been radio carbon dated to around 5,000 years old. A single spruce root basket discovered on Prince of Wales Island was radio carbon dated to about 6,000 years old—the oldest known basket on the Northwest coast. However, most baskets seldom survive in the archaeological record, as they are made from perishable materials. Such materials are only found in the driest or wettest conditions.

A wide variety of prehistoric Tlingit artifacts were constructed either entirely or in part from spruce roots, e.g., hats, fish traps, and fish hooks. While spruce root basketry as a functional method of creating useful baskets is virtually gone, Tlingit basketry has become a recognized art form in today's world. There are few art forms around the world that have remained unchanged for so many centuries and generations. The relationship with place continues today.

An understanding of how spruce roots were traditionally used is invaluable to archaeologists and cultural resource managers. When there are no written records of how certain artifacts were made, archaeologists try to find out how artifacts were made by trying to do it themselves. The product of this kind of experimental archaeology is information, or data, not the artifact itself. This type of data can lead to a better understanding of how humans adapted to their environment.

Rofkar's willingness to teach local volunteers about spruce root basketry provided an opportunity for us to gather archaeological documentation of where spruce roots are gathered and how they are processed. Gaining a better understanding of what these baskets are made from, along with construction techniques, can help archaeologists recognize any artifacts found while conducting surveys.

The third week in April turned out to be an ideal time to find spruce roots. The weather actually cooperated for the most part. Ten volunteers joined the project besides me, Rofkar, Juneau Ranger District Archaeologist Rachel Myron, and Forest Service boat operators Terry Suminski, Brian Beall, Marty Becker, and Rob Miller.

By the first day of the project, the snow had melted just enough to expose the ground in a nice stand of young Sitka spruce near the beach.

The insulating snow had allowed the roots to stay close to the surface, and continue growing through the winter, making it easy to find and dig them out of the ground.

After about 2-3 hours of digging, we built a small fire on the beach to roast the roots. It only takes about 15-20 seconds to roast them, and then each length of root is pulled through a split stick called an *eenah.* The *eenah* peels the charred outer bark off the roots, exposing the white inner root. I never would have guessed that roasted spruce roots could smell so good—it reminded me of roasted pine nuts popular in the Southwest.

Teri Rofkar

After each day at Fish Bay, we returned to Sitka and spent the evenings splitting the roots in the conference room at the Sitka Ranger District. We learned how to split the roots into thinner and thinner strands, resulting in the warp and weft of a future basket. Rofkar said it takes about 175 yards of strand to make a three-inch by three-inch basket.

None of the volunteers seemed to mind the chilly boat rides, wind and rain, and wet fire wood. Volunteer Christine Winn, a member of the Quinault Tribe, from the Washington coast, joined the project specifically to learn the spruce root basketry process. Spruce root basketry used to be a traditional Quinault art form, but the knowledge concerning root procurement and processing has been lost. Thanks to this project, Winn learned about the collection and preparation of spruce roots, and how to split them for making baskets. She will be able to return to Quinault with the knowledge to pass on a lost tradition.

Rofkar did an outstanding job of choosing the volunteers, as well as teaching the art of spruce root basketry. Her knowledge and enthusiasm made this the most enjoyable *Passport in Time* project with which I have been involved. Myron ensured that everything went smoothly. The boat operators got us to the project area and back safely. We even had s'mores to help us keep warm.

Thanks to everyone involved in the project, we were able to learn a great deal about an aspect of traditional Tlingit culture, and better understand important information about a near-extinct art form. It was especially rewarding to know that this technology will be revitalized in a coastal area in Washington where it had been lost. I hope we can conduct future projects with Rofkar and other artists in Southeast Alaska.

Gunalchéesh a<u>x</u> ée at yilatóowu! (Thanks for teaching me!)

Enterprise Teams and the Alaska Region

By Nadine Pollock, TEAMS Enterprise Program

The Forest Service has its own entrepreneurs—hard working individuals who formed teams to offer their skills and services via enterprise units within the agency. The pilot enterprise program began in 1997 in the Pacific Southwest Region as part of the National Performance Review & Government Improvement Results Act. In August 2006, the enterprise program was adopted on a permanent, nationwide basis by the Washington Office.

Collectively, the 14 enterprise units have undertaken hundreds of projects nationwide. Enterprise teams have assisted with a number of projects in the Alaska Region. For example, on the Tongass National Forest, Recreation Solutions provided support and project management for the preparation of the environmental impact statement for the forest plan amendment. The TEAMS enterprise team worked on various environmental documents for the Thorne Bay Ranger District.

On the Chugach National Forest, Recreation Solutions analyzed winter motorized and non-motorized access on the Seward Ranger District. They conducted 12 collaborative meetings around Seward where over 200 people were in attendance. They also provided coordination between Human Resources and district personnel in hiring processes.

For the first time in six years, proposals for new enterprise units are being solicited. Detailed information on submitting a business prospectus to the Enterprise Steering Committee can be found at http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/enterprise-program/ Also, a DVD entitled *Enterprisers & You: The Winning Combination,* was recently released. Interested groups and individuals may also contact William Helin, Director, Enterprise Program, (202) 205-0883.

A Fish Story

By Ken Hodges, Fisheries Biologist, Cordova Ranger District

Just when you think you know a few basic facts about fish, a whole new mystery appears. For coho salmon, the conventional wisdom is that juveniles undergo "smoltification"—the physical changes that prepare them for life in saltwater—as they migrate to the ocean during the spring. However, Cordova Fisheries Biologist Dirk Lang and Dr. Gordon Reeves from the Pacific Northwest Research Station observed some smolt-like changes in the larger juveniles in late summer and fall. They had to ask themselves, "Were these fish actually migrating to the ocean in the fall?"

Cordova Ranger District fish technicians implanting a 15 mm long radiotag in a juvenile coho salmon. The tag is placed in the body cavity and the incision is closed with a surgical adhesive.

The Cordova Ranger District completed a three-year project on Mile 18 Creek monitoring the movement of these fish using radiotags. The fish don't appear to be going to the ocean, according to project leader Kirsti Jurica. Some fish, however, are leaving the Mile 18 Creek system and moving through tidally-influenced sloughs to find winter habitat. This migration may lead biologists to reconsider winter habitat needs and the factors that limit coho salmon production.

Lang remembered seeing these smolt-like coho during a juvenile growth study.[1] He said, "We noticed many of the larger fish had characteristics of smolts: silvery sides and the loss of parr marks. We recaptured very few fish in the main channel ponds, even though we marked hundreds of fish. Obviously, migrating fish were passing through the area, but the question was whether they were migrating to other winter habitat or if this was a true smolt migration to the ocean or estuarine areas."

A true fall migration would challenge the assumptions biologists have made about stream productivity and enhancing winter habitat. On Mile 18 Creek, seven years of monitoring spring smolt migrations and a habitat-based production model by Reeves suggest that the lack of winter habitat limits coho salmon production. If significant numbers of smolt migrate to the ocean in the fall, the movement could be a response to the lack of winter area or it could suggest that winter habitat is not needed for these particular fish.

From 2004 to 2006, the Cordova District radiotagged a total of 33 smolts in the spring and 17 suspected smolts in the fall. This allowed the crew to compare the movements of the suspected fall smolts and the spring migrants known to be smolts. A full-capture weir and a rotary screwtrap were used to compare the total number of fish migrating in the fall and spring. Radiotagging small Alaskan smolts had never been done before.

"In the initial literature search," Jurica said, "I hadn't found any fish this small being tagged. In Washington and Oregon they had radiotagged lots of coho salmon smolts for the hatcheries, but their smolts were twice the size of ours—180 to 200 mm, while ours average 100 to 110 mm."

The radiotags had to be quite small (15 mm, 0.75 grams) to be implanted in the fish and still meet the 5% tag to fish weight ratio. This severely limited the size of the battery used to power the radio. In addition, very few fish were captured that were large enough to tag (minimum 125 mm, 15 g).

"The limiting factors with the tags were the battery life and transmission power– that's what we battled with," Jurica said. "The battery life was okay for 23 days, but you had to be right on top of the fish to find them: 500 meters doing an aerial survey and 100-200 meters on the ground depending on the vegetation and terrain."

Fisheries technician Kirsti Jurica tracking a radiotagged juvenile coho salmon in a small creek in November. By November, most fish had stopped migrating and had settled into their winter homes.

Despite the limited transmission, the radiotracking provided some startling results. Within Mile 18 Creek, many of the suspected fall smolts migrated back upstream, not downstream to the ocean. Some fish that went downstream found off-channel sloughs or ponds that looked like mere trickles or puddles. One fish traveled 2.4 km upstream through the tidally influenced Alaganik Slough to another small creek.

"I was surprised at some of the areas they moved into," Lang said. "There were small slough ponds that I would expect to freeze out or become anoxic in winter because of the apparent low flows. We really need to see if there are subsurface flows that carry oxygenated water to these ponds."

Apparently the fish are using areas biologists never considered to be winter habitat. In addition, even though the fall migration averaged only a few hundred fish compared to 20,000 in the spring, the boundaries of the "system" are not just confined to a single creek. Because of this, we need to look at the bigger picture when planning fisheries projects, according to Jurica.

"When you're looking at habitat management, you cannot just manage for the Mile 18 Creek system. If you're trying to determine limiting factors, such as overwintering habitat, you need to look at the entire watershed because they're using other tributaries as well."

Further monitoring could determine whether juvenile coho salmon are using the extensive slough channels and estuarine areas of the lower Copper River Delta for winter habitat. As one of the Alaska Regions three Key Coastal Wetlands, we need to better understand its role in the lives of juvenile salmon. Given the extensive migrations we have uncovered in this monitoring project, the juvenile coho are using the delta streams in very different ways than previously thought. This could radically change our thoughts about the factors limiting coho salmon production and how we design future project work.

1. Lang, D.W., G.H. Reeves, J.D. Hall, and M.S. Wipfli. 2006. The influence of fall-spawning coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) on growth and production of juvenile coho salmon rearing in beaver ponds on the Copper River Delta, Alaska. Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences 63:917-930.

Fisheries technician Sean Meade tracking a radiotagged juvenile coho salmon in a small off-channel slough. The monitoring found that fish were using shallow low-flow areas that were never considered to be viable winter habitat.

Protected Area Management on the Kamchatka Peninsula

By Susan J. Alexander, Regional Economist, Regional Office

The Kamchatka Peninsula, part of the Russian far east, is home to some of the world's most unique natural areas. This is a result of the region's long isolation due to its strategic military significance, low population density, and few roads. The peninsula has numerous rare, endemic, and unique species, and the geography is varied and spectacular. About half the land base is in an extensive system of regional, national, and international protected areas.

The peninsula is a zone of volcanism, with 30 active volcanoes, 300 extinct volcanoes, 2500 cones, and characteristics typical of volcanic areas including cold mineral springs, hot springs, and geysers. Much of the peninsula is dominated by birch forests, marshes, tundra, and sub-alpine and high-elevation alpine complexes.

All six species of Pacific salmon, representing one-third of the entire Pacific population, inhabit the rivers. Kamchatkan brown bear, the second-largest subspecies in the world, are found in pockets throughout the peninsula. Sixty percent of the total population of the rare Stellar's sea eagle, the largest eagle in the world, lives in Kamchatka. According to preliminary data, 59 faunal species on the peninsula are threatened or endangered.

The five most numerous nationalities and ethnic groups living in Kamchatka are Russians, Ukrainians, indigenous people, Tatars, and Belarussians. Of the approximate 4,600 indigenous people in the Kamchatka Peninsula, most are Kamchadals, Itelmeny, Evens, and Kryaks. About 85% of the population lives in Petropavlovsk, the largest city on the peninsula. Commercial fishing constitutes the basis of the regional economy. The region contributes over 17% of the fish and sea products catch in the Russian Federation.

A traditional Russian far east outdoor market with dried fish, including salmon. Photo by Susan Alexander.

If I could have flown directly from Anchorage to Petropavlovsk it would have taken about 4 hours. But, there were no direct flights from here to there. The journey to get to this wild and isolated place, so close to us, took 3 days one way.

I participated in a workshop in Petropavlovsk in early February 2007 that focused on protected area management and monitoring. Participants included officials in Russian federal land management agencies, regional government, and nonprofits. Forest Service International Programs, the Consortium for International Protected Area Management, the United Nations Development Programme, and Wild Salmon Center worked with the Kamchatka Regional Administration and Russian experts to develop a joint program to share regional, national, and international experience in protected area management and training. The goal of the seminar was to share experiences and information, create one-year action plans that applied information gained during the seminar that applied to specific protected areas, and assess future training needs.

Protected area managers face huge issues of funding, poaching, uncontrolled visitation, resource extraction, and convoluted laws and regulations. They are working to develop, sustain, and improve wildlife and wilderness resource enforcement and tourism infrastructure in protected areas. Kamchatka is still feeling the economic downturn and

associated social hardships that have affected the entire Russian Federation in the past decade. Unemployment is high and the region has been losing population. Between 36% to 51% of the population have income below subsistence levels. There has been a dramatic downturn in the federal budget for protected areas, forcing the Kamchatka Oblast Administration to become more self-reliant in meeting budget needs. This translates to greater pressure to develop the region's largely untapped natural resources, including minerals, oil, and gas.

Kamchatka Peninsula land managers face serious issues, as identified by a project initiated by the United Nations Development Program. The capacity for administration, resource and visitor use management, and enforcement in protected areas in Kamchatka are inadequate. Essential biological, social, and economic information has been inaccessible, missing, or not readily useful for decision-making. Electronic databases are almost nonexistent, and information is not or cannot be shared.

The most significant constraint on nature conservation initiative in protected areas is massive underfunding. According to the UNDP, protected areas receive 10% of the budget resources needed to maintain basic essential operations. Infrastructure has been deteriorating, and essential operations such as law enforcement and research have been drastically curtailed or eliminated. Qualified expertise is leaving due to low salaries, and it is difficult to attract or retain appropriately qualified personnel. The sum of these pressures is that the protected areas are hard pressed to effectively fulfill their most basic mandated obligations. Community involvement in protected area management is low, reflecting a lack of knowledge of, support for, and engagement in conservation activities. There is no tradition of involving local and indigenous people in protected area management.

Volcano near Petropavlovsk. Photo by Lara Peterson.

The UNDP has been promoting co-management and the establishment of Community Conservation Councils, but efforts to connect communities to protected areas will take continuous effort and assistance. Some of the action plans developed in the February seminar addressed entering data into databases that could be used in planning and monitoring, and involving communities in protected area management.

The protected area managers who participated in this seminar are dedicated professionals struggling with enormous problems, caused in large part by serious budget shortfalls, a difficult set of laws and regulations, and a lack of historic formal and informal ties to communities. Yet, they are trying their best to learn how to do their jobs better, find ways to do the best they can with what they have, and explore options for a better future. They clearly believe that the fabulous and unique characteristics of the Kamchatka peninsula are worth personal and professional sacrifices. Assistance we provide through the Forest Service International Forestry program helps them with the incremental steps they are undertaking.

A Russian bathhouse with beautiful traditional wood carving detail. Photo by Susan Alexander.

Kids Meet Birds

By Paul Meyers, Wildlife Biologist, Cordova Ranger District

Students from Alaska to Argentina had their eyes focused on Hartney Bay, near Cordova Alaska, as the educational program *Migration Science and Mystery—A Distance Learning Adventure* broadcast live in classrooms throughout the hemisphere May 10. The stars of the show were Cordova's students in grades 7-8 and 100,000 shorebirds.

The program was coordinated by Erin Cooper from the Cordova Ranger District, and included partners from USFS International Programs (Copper River International Migratory Bird Initiative), the Prince William Network, Audubon Alaska, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Ducks Unlimited, and ProNatura Mexico. Governor Sarah Palin was present at Hartney Bay, and Senator Lisa Murkowski provided a taped statement.

The event was the culmination of a series of broadcasts and web chats that followed migrating shorebirds through seven critical wetland habitats starting in Panama Bay, Panama, and moving to Santa Maria Bay, Mexico, San Francisco Bay, the Frasier River Delta, and the Tongass' Stikine River Flats on the Wrangell Ranger District. The program was tied to a six-month science curriculum focusing on birds and migration that was distributed to schools across the hemisphere.

"The program emphasizes the mystery of migration, and was designed to highlight the links that we have with other parts of Alaska, other states, and other countries," said Cooper. "Kids in classrooms all over the hemisphere have been tuned in to this migration from its start. We estimate that a half million people have participated in some part of the overall program this year."

Alaska Governor Sarah Palin (far left) and Cordova District Ranger Dan Logan (right forefront) look at what students found in mud core samples during a live broadcast from Hartney Bay, Cordova, Alaska.

In addition to filming students interacting with their environment, educators, and scientists, the program included webcasts, web chats, and internet resources. Kids from across the county were able to be part of the live program by calling in or emailing questions that were answered on the air. The program was also translated into Spanish and broadcast through Dish Network on the Hispanic Information Network.

Hartney Bay is on the very western tip of the Copper River Delta. The Delta is part of the Chugach National Forest and one of the Alaska Region's Key Coastal Wetlands, a recent designation recognizing the importance of the region's coastal wetlands (the Stikine River Delta and Yakutat Forelands comprise the other two KCWs). Each spring the Copper River Delta is witness to one of Alaska's great natural phenomena and one of its most stunning wildlife events, as three to five million shorebirds stop there to feed during their northward migration. Sixty to eighty percent of the world's western sandpiper population and nearly the entire population of the Pacific race of dunlin stop here over the course of about three weeks.

The program was similar to *Winging Northward*, which aired in 2003 and reached kids across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. The programs increase awareness of the importance of shorebird habitat and attempt to build a sense of place for those students who live near these critical wetlands.

We are lucky to be able to capitalize on this natural educational event," said Cordova District Ranger Dan Logan. "Local Cordovans see this migration every year, but this program gives us a chance to broadcast the event nationally and to let people here know that this is not normal with respect to the rest of the world. We live in a unique place, and we want to make sure that the kids here realize that."

The broadcast is available at http://migration.pwnet.org

“Learn As We Go” Fish Cache

By Teneal Jensen, Heritage Program Manager, Seward Ranger District

Left: Chugach employees join volunteers to learn from Kenaitze elders how to place bark into a fish cache.
Right: Shannon Huber places stones onto the top of the birch to close the pit.

Spring is the time of year when food supplies become scarce, at least it was in the past, when storing fish was not a luxury, but a necessity to Alaska Natives. This past year, archaeologists from the Chugach National Forest decided to explore some of the tradition methods of fish storage by the Kenaitze Indian Tribe. We joined Kenaitze elders and youth in conducting an experiment in ethno-archaeology.

Many of the traditional practices of the Kenaitze Indian Tribe have been unused for generations. One such traditional practice is that of building a cache pit to store the late run of silver salmon along the Kenai River. With instructions from Tribal elders, youth and volunteers constructed a traditional salmon cache pit in 2006.

The project occurred in four sessions. In the spring, we collected birch bark for lining the pit and conducted elder interviews. In the second session in July, when the ground was completely melted, we excavated the pits per instructions of the elders. In the third session we actually cached the fish. In October, we lined the pits with birch bark and layered the pit alternately with grass and fireweed, fish, and eggs in order to store the food for the winter.

The final session of the project occurred April 17. We began with a ceremonial song to honor the traditional practices of the ancestors.

> Thank the Creator for the fish, we take it from the ground, birch, earth and grass. Thank the Creator for the fish, now we will eat it with our dried berries sharing it with our elders and youth. Thank the Creator for the fish, the dogs will be well fed on heads, eggs and grass.

“One, two, three pull!” we say, as we drag a two-hundred-pound boulder out of a cache pit for the second time. After an hour and a half of chipping through the frozen soil and ice, we reached the birch bark lining. Immediately after cracking open the bark, the faint odor of not-so-fresh fish filled the air. We removed the bark, lifted the grasses, and sloppily hauled up the first rotten fish from the cache. We carefully took out each layer only to find that the fish had rotted all the way to the bottom.

The question was, “why,” since the winter had been quite cold and the ground above the fish was frozen solid. It turned out that instead of freezing our fish, we had added so much soil and rock to the top that the caches actually worked as insulators, keeping the fish nice and warm throughout the winter. Other factors included depth—the elders had instructed us to dig four to six feet, and our pit hit bedrock at three. We also placed the fish into the ground before the last run of silvers on the Kenai, before the freeze, far too early in the fall.

We were all very grateful that we were not relying on the fish as a food source. Once the smell faded, we were able to enjoy our potluck lunch. We will redo the project next year, continuing traditional practices and strengthening the relationship between the Tribe and the Forest Service. With a bit more research and a lot of luck, we hope next spring we will be able to eat what we put into the ground this fall.

The U.S. Forest Service—What's That?

By Glenn Cross, Biological Scientist/GIS Analyst, Tongass National Forest

Glenn Cross provided hands-on displays for students interested in the mission of the Forest Service.

When was the first time you learned that there was a federal agency called the U.S. Forest Service? If it was early in your life, did you grow up in a state that had a national forest? Young children and young adults know what a forest is—trees, a lot of them, tightly packed together in a certain area. But, they may have had little concern about who manages those trees, or the trails, streams, and wildlife that come with them.

It was only after traveling for adventure following college that I learned about the Forest Service, and came to understand the true responsibilities of the agency. With the completion of a research project in Yellowstone National Park, I started searching for seasonal summer employment. "Voila!" I found all these positions available in the Forest Service. After my first technician position in the Stanislaus National Forest, I never looked back.

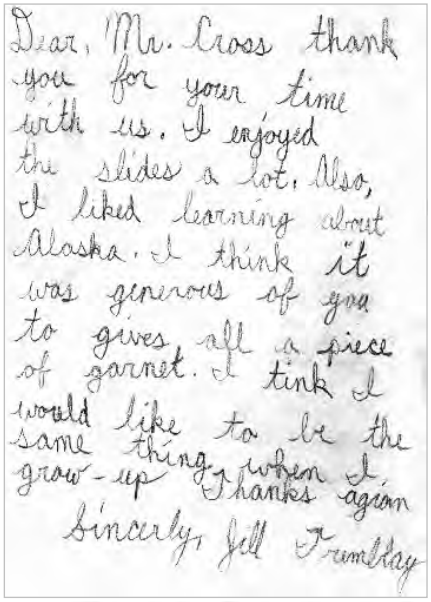
I attended an undergraduate college that focused on teaching. I ended up with a baker's dozen of close friends who are teachers, each working hard to expand or excite the minds of young individuals. It has become a ritual for me, while attending a family wedding or holiday, or taking an unexpected trip home, to accept open invitations to visit classrooms of various grades to talk about the Forest Service, specifically in Alaska.

Young students love to hear about Alaska. It is a mysterious and magical state to them. Many of them do not live in a state with a national forest. They are very attentive when I talk about my field experiences. I explain graphically the largeness of the national forest acreage in Alaska, in a way they can understand. I show slides from Petersburg, Sitka, Hoonah, Juneau, Ketchikan, Craig, Thorne Bay on the Tongass, and Seward on the Kenai Peninsula. The students love the slides—they are immersed in the scenery. Hands pop up seconds after each new slide is put on the screen.

I include a display of personal keepsakes I have collected from daily field activities. The students are excited to touch objects they may never see again. Third graders as such questions as, "Were you scared around bears?" or, "Are the fish really that big?" High school students might ask, "What at is the purpose of a fish pass?"

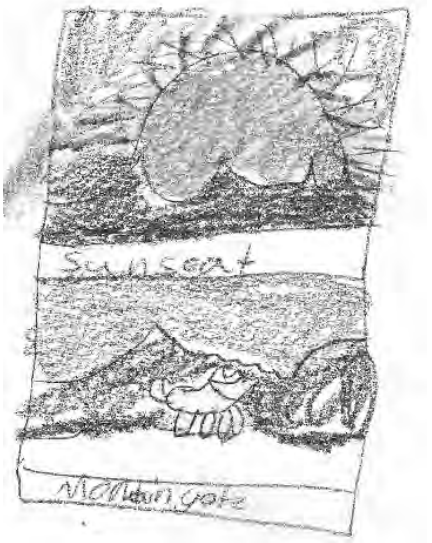
I cannot stress enough how rewarding it is to take time to tell young people at every grade level about the Forest Service and the special employees who make up the agency. The time I volunteer is repaid in ways that a monetary sum could not equal. I have had my legs crushed with hugs of thanks after passing out garnets from Alaska. It was like giving each child a gold nugget. The real reward is to introduce these young people to the land that they actually own, and all the beauty and fun that awaits them on national forest lands.

Letter of appreciation and artwork:



Dear, Mr. Cross thank you for your time with us. I enjoyed the slides a lot. Also, I liked learning about Alaska. I think it was generous of you to gives all a piece of garnet. I tink I would like to be the same thing when I grow-up Thanks again

Sincerly, Jill Trumbley



Adopt-a-box Peek-a-Boo Program

By Laurel Schoenbohm, Seward Ranger District

Peeking in the 46 adopt-a-boxes on the Seward Ranger District every spring is as exciting as watching a five-year-old open presents on her birthday.

Northern Saw-whet Owl

This citizen-science program is part of the Birdhouse Network in association with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. It involves placing nest boxes around the homes of participants where they can then watch the miracle of life unfold. Data, such as number of eggs and young, bird species, and breeding outcomes are reported back to the Cornell Lab.

Every spring the district's wildlife crew don gloves and backpacks full of sawdust bedding material. They carry funny metal poles (tree ladders), and wander around the homes of adopt-a-box hosts with eyes turned up in search of breeding results.

Last summer, 35 owl boxes were checked from Seward to Tern Lake. One box just north of Moose Pass contained four Northern Saw-whet Owl hatchlings. In Seward, there were two different nest boxes with three chickadee eggs each, and one with eight red-breasted nuthatch eggs.

The best surprise occurred late in a day after the crew inspected many vacant owl boxes. One of the wildlife technicians opened a box and uttered a gasp of surprise, almost losing her grip on the ladder. Five pairs of bright glowing Northern Saw-whet eyes stared up at her. It was a great way to end the day!

For more information, see the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's web page at: http://www.birds.cornell.edu/birdhouse/

Bridging the Funding Gap By Using All the Tools

By Terri Walsh, Recreation Planner, Recreation Solutions

The Forest Service and other federal partners have designed a website as a capacity building tool appropriately called *The Toolbox for the Great Outdoors*. For agency managers who are self-motivated, resourceful, and open-minded to new ways of doing business, this toolbox contains a wide variety of solutions for projects that need additional funding.

With these tools, public land managers and partners, including nonprofit organizations, have complete access to dozens of funding sources. The resources can be used to initiate new projects with gateway communities, to create partnerships to leverage appropriated funding, or to complete projects that are unfunded.

Now managers can identify and use a number of new human and financial assets, combining them with contributions from various sources to tackle projects and solve problems.

Visit the website at http://www.tools4outdoors.us to get started.

Toolbox Drawers	Toolbox Projects
Transportation	Better boating and fishing
Wildlife, fisheries, and conservation	Campground improvements
Volunteers and partnerships	Communication and marketing
Youth programs, contests, competitions, and internships	Coordination of recreation efforts
Health and education	Dealing with growth
Economic development and effective program management	Deferred maintenance
Technical assistance and design programs	• Interpretive services • Meeting local needs • Road-related improvements • Trail maintenance

Tongass Minerals Group Guides "Wise Use" at Greens Creek Mine

By Julie Speegle, Public Affairs Specialist, Regional Public Affairs Office

Just a few yards from a bulldozer, a Sitka black-tailed deer grazes on a hillside. A brown bear sow and her cubs are frequently spotted by workers.

Wildlife and mining operations exist side-by-side at the Greens Creek Mine in Southeast Alaska, thanks to a commitment to the environment by joint parent corporations Kennecott Minerals and Hecla Mining Company and the watchful eyes of the Tongass Minerals Group.

Greens Creek Mine is a large, underground silver, zinc, lead and gold mine located on the northern end of Admiralty Island National Monument. It is one of the country's top silver producers, and the top producer of zinc from National Forest System lands. The mine is unique in that it operates within a national monument and in close proximity to Wilderness.

Forest Service employees work closely with Greens Creek officials, which facilitates operations and helps prevent mine downtime for violations. The Tongass Minerals Group conducts site visits on a regular basis to document compliance and to assure environmental protection, while at the same time assuring the company's right to mine.

Greens Creek Mine guide Brian Erickson picks at a bent anchor on the "ribs" or wall of the mine. Photo by Julie Speegle.

(l to r): Regional Asst. Director, Minerals and Geology, John Kato, Tongass Minerals Specialist Steve Hohensee, Admiralty National Monument Ranger Kathryn Rodriguez, Tongass Minerals Program Manager Jeff DeFreest and Tongass Minerals Specialist Sarah Shoemaker tour Greens Creek Mine. Photo by Julie Speegle.

"The Tongass seeks wise use of minerals resources," said Tongass Minerals Program Manager Jeff DeFreest. "The concept is conservation, not preservation."

Tongass Minerals Specialist Sarah Shoemaker travels to Greens Creek Mine about once a week, weather permitting, to review the facilities and operations. She made 32 trips to Greens Creek last year. Her mission is to ensure all surface operations are in compliance with the mine's approved Plan of Operations, which details how the mine is to be operated, and includes measures on sediment control along with all State and Federal permit conditions. She then documents her observations in an inspection report.

"The mine is an extremely conscientious operation," said Shoemaker. "The small problems that I see are usually addressed before I even leave the island."

The concept of being an environmentally sound mine is pushed throughout the corporation from the parent company. Greens Creek is special because it is in compliance with ISO 14001 Environmental Management System requirements, a costly designation to maintain because of the need for numerous audits.

"I think their reputation is well-deserved," said Shoemaker. "They have an incredibly dedicated environmental team working out there, and that team makes it a priority to drive home to every shifter on payroll the importance of their environmental stewardship."

"Subscribing to 14001 ISO says it all," said DeFreest.

While seeking to balance environmental concerns, Greens Creek Mine provides local economic benefits and minerals of national economic, military and industrial importance. The mine is one of the largest private-sector, year-round employers in Juneau, directly and indirectly employing 407 Southeast Alaskans, with an annual payroll of $38 million.

"Throughout my first visit to Greens Creek Mine, I was favorably impressed by the professionalism of the Greens Creek employees, the pride they exhibited in their work, and their high concern for employee safety."

Macky McClung, Assistant Director
Regional Public Affairs Office

(Left to right) Forest Service employees John Kato, Kathryn Rodriguez and Jeff DeFreest prepare to descend into Greens Creek Mine as they ride aboard "the cage." Photo by Julie Speegle.

Personnel Actions

Change in Location

Regional Office
- TJ Friend
- Robert Goetz

Conversion

Tongass National Forest
- Ron Hall
- Lorelei Haukness
- Janet L. Seals
- Erin Uloth

Regional Office
- Heather Busam
- Edward Decker

Detail

Chugach National Forest
- Teresa Paquet
- Cara A. Staab

Tongass National Forest
- Christy R. Gardner
- Travis K. Jones
- Maxine L. Kolu
- Robert McCoy
- Paul M. Wild

Regional Office
- Ron Knowles
- Loren D. Walker

Promotion

Tongass National Forest
- Craig Beuhler
- Jacob Hofman
- Angelina Lammers
- Stephen Lombard
- Jennifer MacDonald
- Michael Mullin
- Penny Richardson
- Kay Steffey
- Marina Whitacre

Regional Office
- David Chandler
- Sharon L. Cordell
- Daniel M. Logan

Reassignment

Tongass National Forest
- Sean G. Maiers
- Patricia Schmidt
- Kristen Thweatt
- Erin Uloth

Regional Office
- Kay Fermann

Transfer Out

Chugach National Forest
- George Bittorf

Tongass National Forest
- Corriene Demientieff
- James Langlois
- Morgan Sandall

Recruitment

Chugach National Forest
- Elizabeth Brann
- Leon E. Drew, Jr.
- William R. Harris
- Daniel W. Logan
- William MacFarlane
- Moira McKelvey
- Sharon Randall
- Dan Svoboda
- James Thomas

Tongass National Forest
- Lee A Benson
- Corey J. Betz
- Megan Blake
- William T. Bojorques
- Michael E. Brown
- Maria C. Burke
- Benjamin R.Case
- Carey G.Case
- Sharon J. Ervin
- Daniel Flickinger
- Kevin M. Foley
- Justin E. Gilbert
- Jill A Grady
- Chad A. Leshuk
- Dorothy Nix
- Lynda D Nore
- Frank K. Simmons
- Leah R. Taylor

Regional Office
- Charisse Breedlove
- Samuel H. Carlson
- Dennis Deason
- Teresa Dickey
- Colby Marvin
- Stephen Tchalemian

Time-Limited Promotion

Chugach National Forest
- Teresa Benson
- Timothy Charnon
- Troy Hagan
- Gwen M Herrewig
- Barbara Hollenbeck
- Daniel W. Logan
- Paul Meyers
- Joshua Milligan
- Kevan Paluso
- Bette Welch
- Tanya Zastrow

Tongass National Forest
- Thomas A. Cady
- Linda Christian
- Brad L. Hunter
- Kristen Lease
- Sheri Nicholson
- Kelly O'Soup
- Katie Rooks
- Christopher Savage
- Robert M. Sheets
- Buchanan Willoughby

Regional Office
- Heather Busam
- James Fincher
- Rick Griffen
- Dave P. Harris
- John Inman

Resignation

Chugach National Forest
- Triena Slatter

Tongass National Forest
- Susan Christensen
- Matthew R.Jones
- Trisha Miles-Diehl
- Timothy Montgomery

Regional Office
- Ada Feak
- George Jordan
- Mary Anne Young

Retirement

Tongass National Forest
- Dexter Duehn
- Rose B Greenup
- Dennis Neill
- William R Dougan
- Kate Martini

Regional Office
- Linda L Jones
- Dan Castillo
- Ellen Campbell

A Smaller Footprint: Earth Day 2007 at MGVC

By Irene Morris, Information Assistant, Tongass National Forest

Juneau celebrated Earth Day at the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center April 22. Opening ceremonies included Mayor Bruce Botehlo, District Ranger Pete Griffin, and Bill Leighty, who offered their personal stories and enthusiasm.

Woodsy Owl and Igor Healy celebrate Earth Day at Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center.

In the spirit of this year's theme, *A Smaller Footprint,* seventeen local organizations brought tables of valuable information, demonstrations and activities to educate and delight the crowds. They organized Audubon bird walks, coral reef clay modeling, and trees for planting. Children filled the auditorium where they learned to make rainsticks, buttons, necklaces and terrariums from recycled items. Families participated in a scavenger hunt to find ways to "help the Earth" as they visited the tables. A large globe at the front of the visitor center invited folks to write a pledge on a "footprint" and tack it to the Earth, promising in their own way to help the planet.

A day of celebration would not be complete without music and dancing, and Earth Day was no exception. Tim Miles recited *The Lorax* (a Dr. Seuss story about the environment) to a crowd of all ages. The Daughters of the New Moon belly-danced their way into the auditorium. The Heartstrings violin ensemble entertained in front of the fireplace, followed by Ken Birch, Liz and Leif Saya, John Lager and John Ingalls. An appearance by Woodsy Owl was a highlight for the children.

A beautiful, sunny day at the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center…what could be a better setting to celebrate our wonderful planet Earth?

Dispatchers Praised

By Patricia Moulton, Union Health & Safety Representative

On April 9 at the Petersburg Supervisor's Office family/safety meeting, Staff Officer Charlie Streuli recognized the efforts of Dispatchers Trina Ives and Vivian Hjort with a gold pan. On behalf of Forest Supervisor Forrest Cole, the dispatchers were presented this annual award for "Outstanding Leadership and Dedication to Dispatch and Aviation Safety on the Tongass National Forest."

At a family meeting in the Ketchikan Supervisor's Office in February, Forest Aviation Officer John Krosse received similar recognition and accepted a gold pan on behalf of the entire aviation group. Now each of the dispatch offices has a replica of the award.

Representing Petersburg Dispatch are Vivian Hjort, Bill Moulton and Trina Ives with the Forest Supervisor's Annual Safety Award. Photo by Patricia Moulton.

100 Years of Women on the Chugach

By Bridget Brown, Wildlife Technician, Glacier Ranger District, Chugach National Forest

What could be a better way of celebrating the centennial of the Chugach National Forest than exploring the history of women on the Chugach? Well, nothing (except maybe the cookies we have enjoyed at our Girl Scout event).

This past February in Anchorage, a few of us from the Glacier Ranger District (Teresa Benson, Lezlie Murray, Betty Charnon, Stephanie Israel, Heather Hall, and I) attended the Girl Scouts' annual *Women in Science Day*. We started our presentation with an inspiring slideshow about women who have lived, worked, and played on the Chugach for the last 100 years. The Scouts then headed off to three different stations where they explored the lives of historical figures like Alaska's Frontier Nellie and anthropologist Frederica de Laguna. The Girl Scouts also learned interviewing skills by asking us questions about our jobs and how we got interested in science. They used the Internet to research our current work and projects.

Chugach women's uniforms throughout the years. Top: Teresa Benson, Stephanie Israel, Bridget Brown. Bottom: Lezlie Murray, Heather Hall, Betty Charnon (wearing a uniform from the dates of Gifford Pinchot and Teddy Roosevelt).

To wrap up the day, we discussed what was learned and how the girls were inspired by Chugach employees. Their favorite occupations included snow rangers and wildlife biologists. We hope that a few of the students were encouraged to become women of the Forest Service in the future.

The Green Mile

By Ray Massey, Regional Public Affairs

Regional Office employees Julie Speegle, Gary Sonnenberg, Melinda Hernandez and Debbie Anderson and retiree Ellen Campbell kicked off our first "Adopt-A-Highway" clean-up this year. Wini Kessler, Hannah Atadero and Lake Koelling followed a week later to finish picking up the clutter on the one mile of Egan Drive in Juneau that has been adopted by Juneau area employees.

The first spring day that we chose as work day had driving wind, a "little" chill, and some slight dampness. I've never seen so much garbage picked up by so few in so little time. It kind of reminds me of a Winston Churchill speech, "Never in the annals of history have so few done so much...," or something like that.

I never could figure out where the one sock could disappear to in the laundry, but I found out where all the missing gloves were. We found at least a half a dozen—and none matched!

We also picked up headlights, cowlings, fenders, and a great pair of hub caps deposited by all those cars that slid off Egan Drive last winter in the ice and snow.

Hannah Atadero, Wini Kessler, and Lake Koelling Photo by Ray Massey.

Productive Partners

By Susan Howell, Fish, Wildlife, Watershed Staff, Tongass National Forest

Tongass employees Soil Scientist Dennis Lendwehr, Geologist Jim Baichtal, and Craig District Ranger Greg Killinger discuss work priorities with Dave Albert of The Nature Conservancy.

The Nature Conservancy and the Forest Service have long enjoyed a productive working relationship at national and regional levels. The global uniqueness of Southeast Alaska's coastal forests has drawn The Nature Conservancy to select it as one of four focus areas in Alaska. TNC entered into an agreement with the Tongass National Forest that encourages our organizations to "…work together to achieve a balance of working forests, habitat reserves and sustainable communities for the benefit of people, fish and wildlife."

According to a recent conservation assessment completed by TNC and Alaska Audubon, Prince of Wales Island—which grows some of the region's largest trees and supported the most intense logging in Southeast—remains one of the most biologically diverse and productive provinces in Southeast Alaska. This ecological richness, coupled with our many communities, vast transportation system, and economic potential, led TNC to select Prince of Wales as one of three local project areas for their coastal forest program. Since 2005, TNC has worked with the Forest Service to implement stream restoration, road storage and riparian thinning projects on the island. TNC has been instrumental in leveraging implementation funds through direct investments, Centennial Challenge funds, and NOAA grants.

However, TNC brings much more than funding to collaborative stewardship. Since February, they have worked with state, federal and tribal agencies, private landowners and local watershed councils to design a systematic method for prioritizing watershed restoration activities on Prince of Wales. This method incorporates the best available science, and most current Forest Service planning and strategy documents.

The prioritization process looks at aquatic ecosystems, (represented by salmon), and terrestrial ecosystems (represented by deer). The process then considers the biological value of the watershed as described by salmon presence, miles of stream habitat, presence of sensitive or unique salmon stocks, deer winter range, and human uses such as subsistence harvest and outfitter/guide use. The biological value of a watershed is then contrasted with the need for restoration as measured by the amount of young growth, road density, stream crossings, number of dysfunctional culverts, and amount of riparian harvest.

When all watersheds were plotted, certain drainages such as Staney Creek, Harris River, North Thorne River, and Twelve-mile Creek showed as both high value and high need—a good place for the long-term investment of restoration funds. TNC and the Forest Service are working to apply a third criterion, opportunity, to the evaluation that incorporates stewardship contracting, bundling of multiple contracts, commercial thinning opportunity, partnerships, and research.

A stakeholder meeting was held in Craig April 25 to present the process, demonstrate some initial outcomes, and seek input on accuracy and utility. The simplicity and utility of the process were evident to the stakeholders. While TNC and the Forest Service work to refine the process and publish a report this summer, the initial output is already being used to prioritize fiscal year 2008 project planning for watershed assessments, implementation of thinning and road storage projects, grant applications, and outyear contract preparation.

While the process was designed for Prince of Wales, with little modification it can be used on any unit on the Tongass National Forest.

COULD YOU SURVIVE INTERPRETIVE BOOT CAMP?

By April Rand, Tongass Marine Highway Program, Juneau Ranger District

Survivors of Interpretive Boot Camp: front row: Irene Morris, Mareta Weed, Laurie Craig, Back Row: Instructor April Rand, Elayne Boyce, Lindsey Edgar, Barbara Lindh, and John Schwinghammer.

Attention! During the next week you will be responsible for learning the history of the field of interpretation, how interpretation is like poetry, how to read your audience, how to capture the attention of said audience with any topic of your interest, and how to evaluate your effectiveness in accomplishing the goals of your programs. You must also complete a written exam, prepare an outline for an interpretive program, and demonstrate all that you have learned this week. When you present your 10-minute program in which you will link tangibles and intangibles, you will make this program:

Purposeful
Organized,
Enjoyable
Thematic
Relevant, and develop
Yourself as an interpreter.

Are you up for this challenge? Are you ready for interpretive boot camp?

When I asked these questions, seven interpreters from the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center responded which an enthusiastic, yet apprehensive, "Yes!"

The Certified Interpretive Guide program, which I dubbed "Interpretive Boot Camp, was developed by the National Association for Interpretation to professionalize the field of interpretation. Constancio Bolima, a long time employee with the Tongass Marine Highway Program, was the very first person to earn this credential back in 2001.

The seven cadets applied their new knowledge throughout the week during a variety of activities, and culminated with the presentation of an original interpretive program. The students did a phenomenal job with their programs, which covered topics including how the "pop culture" bear is different from a real bear, why glacial water is not a good source of hydroelectric power, the obstacles terns must overcome in order to reproduce, how all living things have the same basic needs as you, how owls are perfectly adapted to their environment, the inspirational struggle of salmon, and how our actions influence the reactions of bears. They demonstrated interpretive techniques and pushed the creative envelope.

One of the most valuable aspects of the class was the opportunity for students to see their colleagues give programs. Once the season gets going, there are few, if any, opportunities to observe coworkers in action. Despite the fact that many were apprehensive about the class, in the end, the feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

Please join me in congratulating the survivors of Interpretive Boot Camp: Irene Morris, Mareta Weed, Laurie Craig, Elayne Boyce, Lindsey Edgar, Barbara Lindh, and John Schwinghammer.

AT EASE.

Employee Civil Rights

The Tongass Civil Rights Advisory Group is a conduit between employees and the Tongass leadership on issues of civil rights on the forest. In their advisory role, TCRAG research issues and develops recommendations for the leadership team concerning civil rights. In many cases, TCRAG does the work itself to reduce or mitigate civil rights concerns.

"I have learned that a productive and healthy organization is one in which people are treated with respect and dignity."

Olleke Rappe-Daniels
DeputyForestSupervisor

Current TCRAG Members:

- Jeff DeFreest—Chair, Rotating Voting Member
- Angelina Lammers—Co Chair Rotating Voting Member
- Hans von Rekowski—Rotating Voting Member
- Sandra Skrien—Rotating Voting Member
- Mike White—Union Member
- Karen Dillman—Rotating Voting Member
- Olleke Rappe-Daniels—Tongass Leadership Team Advisor
- John Autrey—Human Resources Liaison and Tribal Liaison

TCRAG shares the following mission on their website at http://fsweb.stikine.r10.fs.fed.us/tongass/mains/tcrag.shtml.

Who we are:

An employee group that champions the concerns and issues of all employees to the Forest Supervisor

We are:

Dedicated to enhancing the well-being and productivity of the Tongass workforce.

We accept the challenge:

- To advocate for the civil rights of all employees.
- To promote and embrace diversity in the workforce.
- To encourage civil rights training for all employees.
- To facilitate special emphasis program activities.
- To recognize and reward employees who contribute to civil rights.

To accomplish this, we:

- Listen and respond to employee and management issues.
- Screen issues to determine if they are civil rights concerns.
- Communicate with monthly teleconferences and meetings twice a year.
- Invite employees to the meetings.
- Share notes of the meetings via e-mail and website.

Tongass employees can contact any current member if they would like to get involved or be considered for membership.

Extra Effort Awards

Chugach National Forest
Carol S. Huber
Courtney E. Brown
David G. Sanders
Gwen M. Herrewig
Karen Kromrey
Steve Hennig
Teneal A. Jensen

Tongass National Forest
Becki Saari
Cheri Friend
Cynthia Sever
Dennis Sylvia
Eric B. Henderson
Eric Ouderkirk
James Schramek
John T. Autrey
Katherine Prussian
Marla Dillman
Mary Emerick
Michael Shephard
Michelle Putz
Paul Valcarce
Prentiss Adkins
Richard Jacobson
Robert Sheets
Sally Burch
Sean Maiers
Susan Jennings
Terry Fifield
Tim Lydon
Timothy Paul
Victoria Houser

Interagency
Bruce Landon
Jim Hale

Regional Office
Angelina Lammers
Betsy Rickards
Dawn C. Germain
Karin Preston
Ken Dinsmore
Lillian Petershoare
Maria Strafford
Mary A. Miller
Mary Anne Young
Pauline Higdon
Randy Coleman
Robert Housley
Robin Dale
Susan Alexander
Tim A. Obst

Travel Gain Sharing

Chugach National Forest
Lauro Garcia
Mary Ann Benoit

Tongass National Forest
Alice F. Grant
Chris Dowling
Heath W Whitacre
Kent Nicholson
Marina Whitacre
Mathew Durfey
Reid Stovall
Tonya R. Rymer

Regional Office
Brian Goettler
David Chandler

Chief Fisheries Guru Honored

By Wini Kessler, Director of Wildlife, Fisheries, Ecology, Watershed, and Subsistence Management

From the Tongass, back row: Steve Paustian, Hydrologist; Dennis Landwehr, Soil Scientist. Front row: Scott Snelson, Fish, Soil and Water Staff Officer; Dick Aho, Fisheries Biologist; Ron Medel, Fisheries Program Manager. Photo by Trish O'Connor.

Catching Dick Aho off guard was almost worth the price of not being able to personally present him with the *2006 WFEWS Director's Award*. After several months of trying to find a suitable occasion, I called upon Tongass Forest Supervisor Forrest Cole to make the presentation at the April 16 meeting of the Tongass Leadership Team. This was a most appropriate venue considering Aho's extraordinary career as "chief fisheries guru" on the Tongass National Forest.

The *WFEWS Director's Award* was initiated in 1984 to recognize employees in wildlife, fisheries, ecology, watershed, or subsistence management who are making outstanding contributions to their professional fields, to communities, and to the Alaska Region's mission. Aho's nomination letter described the pivotal and positive role that he has served in the Tongass Fisheries Program since moving to Alaska in 1980. As the Forest Fisheries Biologist, he has demonstrated extra professional effort in all aspects of the fisheries resource enhancement program. From project conception, to implementation and monitoring, Aho's effective teamwork and technical advice have been instrumental in aligning enhancement projects with the Comprehensive Salmon Plan and other priorities and goals.

Aho is well known and warmly appreciated for his ease in working with people at all levels, and for the quality of his technical counsel. The fish crossing prioritization project, fish MIS monitoring, stock assessments, and the Bakewell coho restoration project are among the many successful endeavors that have benefited from Aho's expertise, dedication, and careful attention to detail.

Aho's manner in achieving these results is legendary. In the words of his colleagues, "He quietly listens and absorbs all discussion, waiting to say just the right thing, at the right time, never too long, but always enough, and always right on target." It's no wonder that Aho is widely recognized and sought out as the go-to expert whenever fisheries resources and issues, especially those involving fish habitat and stock enhancements, need to be discussed.

As the 21st recipient, Aho exemplifies the high level of dedication, professionalism, and service that the award is intended to celebrate.

Congratulations Dick, and thank you for your years of exceptional service and accomplishment.

Spot Awards

Chugach National Forest

Andrew Morse
Bette Welch
Charles Lindemuth
Corriene Demientieff
Dave Zastrow
David Allen
David B. Smith
David Loomis
Erin Cooper
Jason Fode
Jeff Mitchell
Jonathan Kirsch
Kathryn Kelley
Kim Kiml
Martin Bray
Mary A. Friberg
Matt Murphy
Michael Truex
Milly Lindall
Milo Burcham
Mona Spargo
Paul Meyers
Rebecca Talbott
Rob Develice
Rob Spangler
Rosemary Barnes
Sean Meade
Tanya Zastrow
William MacFarlane

Tongass National Forest

Alicia Stearns
Amy Sherwin
Bradley Flynn
Carol Denton
Carolyn Heuer
Chris Dowling
Crystal Harlan
Donald Andreasen
Elizabeth Krier
Faith Duncan
Gary Lawton
James Brainard
Kerri Willoughby
Mareta Weed
Marina Whitacre
Mary Emerick
Mathew Durfey
Renaker Parks
Robert Smith
Ron Marvin
Shari Anderson
Sheila Spores
Stephen Stoddard
Sterling Snyder
Wayne Ward

Regional Office

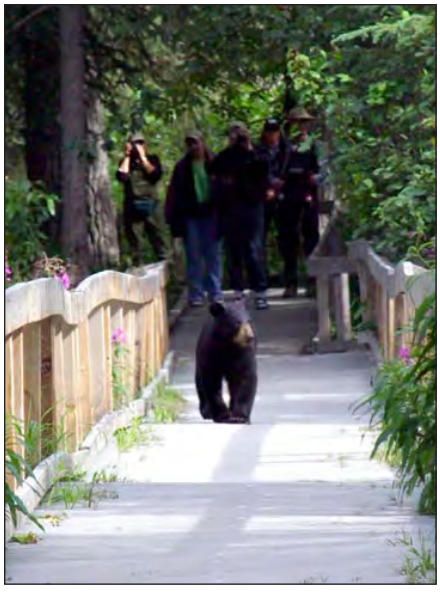
Betsy Rickards
Inga Petaisto
Lake Koelling
Loren D. Walker
Macky McClung
Maria Strafford
Tim A. Obst
Cynthia Snyder
Melinda Lamb
Willie Thompson

Keep Alaska Bears Wild and Anglers Safe

By Bobbie Jo Skibo, Russian River Interagency Coordinator, Chugach National Forest

The Russian River is a clear, shallow stream where anglers often target red (sockeye) salmon or rainbow trout. Similar to the rest of the Kenai Peninsula, brown and black bears inhabit this area, searching for food for themselves and/or their young. Unfortunately, the food sources they often find are coolers full of lunches, stringers of fish, and other sources of human generated food. These food sources are often left unattended on the banks while anglers are catching their limits.

At the Russian River, the most abundant and readily available human generated food source for bears during June and July is filleted fish carcasses. When whole carcasses are thrown into the river, they pile up, creating a concentrated food source which is irresistible to some bears. The filleted carcasses collect at river bends, in slow moving eddies, and are being caught on monofilament line in the river. Gulls also drag whole filleted carcasses out onto the banks so they can feed on them.



A close encounter with a cub.

These are the main human-generated food sources that begin the process of wild bears associating people with food, which can lead to human-bear conflicts. In addition to public safety, future generations of bears and other wildlife will greatly benefit if visitors to the Russian River do a few important things.

1. Secure food, beverages, and other odiferous possessions (backpacks should be worn at all times, coolers should be attended or left in the car, stringers of fish should be kept in the water and closely attended).
2. STOP, CHOP, and THROW filleted fish carcasses into deep, fast-moving water (prevent filleted fish carcasses from collecting along the banks of the river and attracting bears).

What you should do with food, beverages, and odiferous possessions:

To prevent bears from thinking of your coolers, stringers of fish, and backpacks as an easy food source, keep them in sight and closely attended at all times.

A young fisherman tosses his chopped fish carcasses to prevent them from attracting bears. Photo by Diane Owens.

In 2006, federal land managers issued the "Russian River Possession/Storage of Food Items" emergency order and prohibited "possessing or storing any food or refuse further than 3 feet from the person along the Russian River Angler's Trail developed recreation area and banks of the Russian River." The order will continue to be in effect throughout the 2007 summer season.

To keep bears wild and anglers safe, not to mention to keep yourself from a run in with federal enforcement officers, you are encouraged to do your part this season and keep all possessions with you (on your back) or leave them in your car. Fish stringers should be kept in the water and closely attended at all times.

What you should do with filleted fish carcasses:

1. STOP and immediately cut the gills to bleed your fish into the water once caught. Why? This minimizes fish blood on trails and river banks and is known to help the quality of the meat.
2. After filleting, CHOP up your fish carcasses into small pieces How many? Three pieces should be good enough to get them moving down stream.
3. THROW the small pieces into fast moving currents so they don't pile up along the river.

Dream Realized

By John Sandor, Alaska Region Retiree

Active and retired Forest Service employees are joining colleagues and cooperators to make history. By creating the National Museum of Forest Service History in Missoula, Mont., they are working together to assure our nation's forests and related resources are wisely protected and managed for the benefit of present and future generations.

Plans for the museum are well underway. To date, museum's Vice President Dave Stack has received numerous contributions of diaries and pictures, memorials, capital campaign contributions, and applications for membership.

The 36-acre NMFSH site adjacent to the Missoula airport already includes water and sewer infrastructure; the restored bungalow ranger station dwelling; the centennial lookout cab; the Memorial Grove and Arboretum, and thousands of items that have been cataloged by professional curator Beth Humble. The accomplishments so far have been possible because of the time and money donated by dedicated volunteers.

Preliminary design work has been done for an access road with parking and construction of the main exhibit building. Of the $4 million target budget, $700,000 has been raised to date, including a $500,000 Forest Service matching grant. The remaining funds will come from members and friends, and public and private sources.

A replica of a 1930s L-4 lookout tower was constructed by the heritage preservation team of the Northern Region for the 2005 Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C. The tower is being reassembled at the National Museum of Forest Service History in Missoula, Mont.

Please visit the website at www.nmfs-history.net for more information on museum programs as well as a list of individuals, families, and organizations recognized in the *Forest Service History Memorial* and Memorial Grove. The site also has information on membership and contributions to the capital campaign.

You may also contact Dave Stack at nationalforest@montana.com, (406) 541-6374, or John Sandor at jsandor@ak.net if you have any questions or ideas. We look forward to hearing from you.

TLMP: 10 Years Later

A May newsletter commemorating the tenth anniversary of former Regional Forester Phil Janik's signing of the Tongass National Forest Land Management is now available on the SourDough Notes website at http://www.fs.fed.us/r10.

In honor of the 10th anniversary, 113 former TLMP team members were identified, and over 90 of those were contacted. Sixty-six team members still work for the Forest Service, including Chief Gail Kimbell.

The newsletter has highlights, memorable experiences, a timeline, and lessons learned from over a decade.

Keepsake Awards

Chugach National Forest
- George Jordan
- Jeff Bryden
- Lance Valentine
- Lauro Garcia
- Michael Williams
- Terry W. Reid

Tongass National Forest
- Dennis Neill

Regional Office
- George Jordan
- Maria Strafford
- Andrew C Mason

Performance Bonus

Tongass National Forest
- Cynthia E Schelin
- George Doyle
- Merrily Jones

Quality Step Increase

Chugach National Forest
- Andrew Schmidt
- Lance Valentine
- Terry Reid

Tongass National Forest
- Dennis Landwehr
- Larine MacDonald

Regional Office
- Winnie Blesh

Time Off

Chugach National Forest
- Courtney Brown

Chugach National Forest: Celebrating 100 Years

We are up and running with our forest centennial, and trust me, running is a very appropriate description. Below is a small sample of some of the events we have planned. In the coming issues of S*ourdough Notes,* we will show you photos and regale you with tales of fun, success, plans gone awry, laughter, memories, and accomplishment. For now, take a look at what we have planned and if you are in the area, put us on your "to do" list!

Mona Spargo and the Chugach Centennial Team

Centennial Events "*Sampler*"

July 11-31: Inspirations from the Forest
Location: Begich, Boggs Visitor Center, Mile 5.4, Portage Glacier Highway, Portage Valley. This Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibit examines art inspired by national forests.

July 19: Chugach City Celebration
Location: Hilltop Ski Area, Anchorage. Day of activities for kids transitioning into late afternoon family event in partnership with the City of Anchorage and other partners.

July 20: Trail River Campground ribbon cutting
Location: Trail River Campground, Mile 102.8 Seward Highway. On the shore of Kenai Lake, the newly reconstructed and expanded campground is the largest campground on the Forest.

July 21-22: Chugach Centennial Celebration at BBVC and Portage Valley
Weekend events include the Celebration of Culture and Art and multiple activities.

July 28: Childs Glacier Recreation Area ribbon cutting
Location: Childs Glacier Recreation Area, Mile 48 Copper River Highway, Cordova. The newly redesigned recreation area offers spectacular glacier viewing and new campground.

July 28: A Step Through Time
Location: Childs Glacier Recreation Area, Mile 48 Copper River Highway, Cordova. Several hands-on activities and demonstrations depicting what life was like 100 years ago.

July 28: Blue Ice Birding Festival
Location: Begich, Boggs Visitor Center, Mile 5.4 Portage Glacier Highway, Portage Valley. Guided walks, talks and hands-on demonstrations focusing on the birds of the Chugach National Forest.

August 16: Ribbon Cutting for the Whistlestop Project in partnership with the Alaska Railroad
Location: Spencer Glacier
This celebrates the start of Whistlestop service to the backcountry of the Chugach National Forest.

August 23–September 3: Alaska State Fair
Location: Palmer Fairgrounds
Celebration of 100 years of Conservation of the Chugach. In partnership with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources and the "Fire Wise" program.